

ABSTRACT

[104] A router comprising a priority level distinguishing means for distinguishing the priority level of a packet by referring to the information contained in the header of the packet, a routing table where an output path comprising one or more output lines can be mapped to each level of priority, an output path determining unit that searches the routing table and determines an output path to be used for sending out packets, and a preferential delivery controller that executes delivery control in accordance with the priority level for each output line corresponding to the output path. In response to a fault state in a preferred output line, the router can reroute high priority packets over an alternative output line while maintaining priority. The router may also calculate a distribution ratio to determine the optimal load for each output line for a given packet priority.